

PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES

CHRISTIAN

Baptist General Convention
Christian Church in Virginia
Virilina District, Church of the
Brethren
The Episcopal Diocese of Virginia
Episcopal Diocese of Southern
Virginia
Episcopal Diocese of Southwestern
Virginia
Metro Washington Synod,
Evangelical Lutheran Church in
America
Virginia Synod, Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America
Presbytery of the James
National Capitol Presbytery
Shenandoah Presbytery
Presbytery of Eastern Virginia
Roman Catholic Diocese of
Arlington
Potomac Association, United
Church of Christ
Holston Conference, United
Methodist Church
Virginia Conference, United
Methodist Church
Religious Society of Friends
Arlington Interfaith Council
Virginia Council of Churches

JEWISH

Jewish Community Council of
Greater Washington
Richmond Rabbinic Association

MUSLIM

Virginia Muslim Coalition for
Public Affairs



April 18, 2011

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Federal Communications Commission
455 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service Lifeline and Link Up,
CC Docket No. 96-45; WC Docket 03-109; WC Docket 11-42**

Dear Chairman Genachowski

Thank you for continuing to address the Lifeline program through the Federal Communications Commission. Given how slowly the economy is recovering and the continued employment challenges facing many families it is clear that the Lifeline program is a vital bridge for many people.

The Virginia Interfaith Center has worked since 1982 in an attempt to help individuals and families move from abject need to financial sustainability through policy change, micro-enterprise initiatives, and community education. For this reason, we are very supportive of the FCC's efforts to modernize the Lifeline program and would like to see an expansion of its use. Many in Virginia are using the program to ensure they can be contacted for jobs and benefit qualification, both of which are vital in this troubled economy. It would be a shame to put fees and certain certifications in place that create barriers for the program's use. We should be looking for ways to put individuals and families on the path to sustainability and avoid dissuading them from using existing resources. Lifeline seems to be a significant tool in the toolbox of low-income peoples as they look to rebuild their lives and their communities.

Thank you for all you do to address the critical programs that so many people need to weather this economic storm.

Sincerely

C. Douglas Smith
President and CEO